

## Definitions of Bioterrorism Categories

### Category A Diseases/Agents

The U.S. public health system and primary healthcare providers must be prepared to address various biological agents, including pathogens that are rarely seen in the United States. High-priority agents include organisms that pose a risk to national security because they:

- can be easily disseminated or transmitted from person to person;
- result in high mortality rates and have the potential for major public health impact;
- might cause public panic and social disruption; and
- require special action for public health preparedness.

### Category B Diseases/Agents

Second highest priority agents include those that:

- are moderately easy to disseminate;
- result in moderate morbidity rates and low mortality rates; and
- require specific enhancements of CDC's diagnostic capacity and enhanced disease surveillance.

### Category C Diseases/Agents

Third highest priority agents include emerging pathogens that could be engineered for mass dissemination in the future because of:

- availability;
- ease of production and dissemination; and
- potential for high morbidity and mortality rates and major health impact.

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